



FOR RELEASE
SATURDAY AM'S
AUGUST 9, 1968
Telephone 202/225-2961

REMARKS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
AMERICAN GI FORUM
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS
AUGUST 9, 1968

We live in times of unprecedented challenge and change.

Old practices and traditions are giving way...old injustices and prejudices are being rooted out and destroyed.

Most of us can look back 20 years -- to 1948 -- and we know how far we have come. But then we look forward -- to the year 2000 -- and we know how much remains undone -- how, in a sense, the battle has just been joined.

I can remember the Democratic National Convention of 1948 when some of us led a small revolt against the establishment -- when we called upon the Democratic delegates -- and all Americans -- to step from the shadows of states rights into the bright sunshine of human rights. We won that fight.

That same year -- 1948 -- Dr. Hector Garcia was fighting another battle in the cause of human rights. An American soldier who had been killed in action -- Felix Longoria -- had been refused burial in Three Rivers, Texas because of his Latin background. Dr. Garcia fought this unjust decision -- and he won too.

Today the body of Private Longoria rests in Arlington Cemetery -- the same place where our beloved President John Kennedy and our good friend Senator Robert Kennedy are now buried.

This struggle to secure simple justice for one Latin family helped convince Dr. Garcia to expand his one man crusade against intolerance and inequality. He and his followers founded the American GI Forum -- and they chose the philosophy of St. Francis of Assisi as their guide: "...where there is darkness - light; where there is hatred - love; where there is despair - hope."

PAGE TWO

The early supporters of the GI Forum came from the cotton fields of South Texas -- from the sheep and goat raising lands of Southwest Texas -- from the oil country around Midland and Odessa -- and from the big cities.

The GI Forum grew rapidly across the entire Southwest, for Spanish-speaking Americans needed a voice. They needed an organization to help them battle age-old prejudices and discriminations.

Today the GI Forum stands as one of America's great national organizations together with LULAC, The Community Service Organization, and others -- not just striving to secure equality and justice for Spanish-surnamed Americans, but for all Americans.

The Forum's 20 years have seen many victories and much progress. Think how far we've come.

Let me make one point absolutely clear: Your voice has been heard in Washington -- it has been heard in the states with large Latin populations -- and it will be heard this fall when the American people will choose a President, a Congress, and their state and local leaders.

I could spend time reviewing for you the accomplishments of the past several years -- the Latins appointed to high public office -- the projects funded -- the many injustices which have been corrected.

We know that more has been done than ever before -- but we also know that even more remains undone...and that our job is not to seek satisfaction from past achievements, but to look forward -- with some impatience and urgency -- to the tasks ahead.

First among those tasks is peace -- a reduction of the international tensions which are today drawing far too great a share of the world's resources away from urgent human needs.

PAGE THREE

You did not fight the wars of the past -- your boys are not fighting in Vietnam today -- so that there would be more danger...more misery...more war. America has fought its wars and built its unparalleled defensive strength to achieve a groundwork for lasting and honorable peace based on self-determination of nations and dignity of man.

Now I believe it is time to move ahead with equal courage to seize the rewards of peace. I believe that much of the world is ready for reconciliation. I have called for a new era in American foreign policy based on peaceful engagement, rather than containment and hostile confrontation.

That demands peace in Vietnam -- a stable, lasting and honorable peace settlement in Vietnam at the earliest possible moment.

It means getting to the table as soon as possible with the Soviet Union to talk about mutual reduction of both offensive and defensive weapons.

It means a massive international effort to start closing the gap between rich and poor nations.

It means taking every possible American initiative for a peaceful world.

* * * * *

And there are urgent tasks here at home -- in every city and in every town and rural community.

We know these are special problems faced by many Americans of Latin descent. As I said at the El Paso hearings: "Our purpose is grander than simply guaranteeing...the opportunity to achieve a decent American standard of living...We are talking about providing a material basis on which a cultural tradition that is precious to America can grow and flourish."

This cultural tradition was recognized with passage of the Bilingual Education Act -- the first federal recognition of the special importance of the ability to speak two languages.

PAGE FOUR

Now we must launch a major program of bilingual education, including teacher training, scholarships, text books, curriculum reform and research.

We must end -- now -- discriminatory practices in employment -- we must adequately fund the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission so good men like your former national President, Vincente Ximenes, can do their work.

If I am President, I pledge that the federal government will be the model employer of Latins -- and that means from the White House on down.

This includes more responsibility for the Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican American Affairs -- a specific agenda of priority items -- and a secretariat to help the committee accomplish its objectives on schedule.

It includes giving the poor a greater voice in the planning and implementation of local community programs, such as Head Start, and expanding the migrant and legal aid programs.

It includes giving able-bodied men the chance to support their families with dignity and pride. As Cesar Chavez told me last week in Los Angeles: "We want no special favors -- merely the chance to build a union so the members can help themselves."

The farm workers of America must have this chance -- now. They must be covered by the National Labor Relations Act -- with full rights under the law to organize and bargain collectively.

The present minimum wage coverage for farm workers must be extended and we must push forward to achieve other fringe benefits which factory workers have enjoyed for a generation.

As Vice President, I cast the tie-breaking vote to kill an attempt to revive the bracero program. Now we must come to grips with the problem of the green-card commuter.

PAGE FIVE

We have no desire to damage the economy of our good neighbor to the South -- but we cannot accept a situation which severely restricts the economic opportunities of our own citizens.

This is an injustice we must act to correct. If I am President, I will act -- without delay.

In my campaign, I have already proposed that young men be selected for the draft on the basis of the fair and impartial random system -- the national lottery. And draft boards should be fully representative of the local community -- and that means a fair proportion of Latin members where there is a large Spanish-surnamed population.

These are the goals I will pursue as President.

These are the objectives we can strive for together -- in much the same spirit we displayed 20 years ago -- in carrying the civil rights fight in the Democratic National Conventions...and in founding the American GI Forum.

Now we can continue this struggle together. I ask your help.

#

The American GI Forum of the United States

AWARD OF MERIT

To

ATTORNEY JAMES DE ANDA



BANQUET

20th National Convention

Grand Ballroom
Robert Driscoll Hotel

Friday, August 9, 1968
7:00 P.M.

Corpus Christi, Texas

Annual Award of Merit.
THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE U.S.
IN RECOGNITION FOR LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION

OF
ATTORNEY JAMES DE ANDA

*In His Constant Dedication To Protect
The Civil Rights Of The Poor, The
Unlettered, The Needy And The Exploited*

HEREBY PRESENTS
THE ANNUAL AWARD OF MERIT

We Are Proud That Attorney James De Anda
Has Brought To The Mexican Americans One
Of The Greatest Of "Freedoms"

"The Freedom From Fear"

From The Fear Of Lack Of Opportunity or Advancement
From The Fear Of False Arrest and Imprisonment
From The Fear Of Police Brutality
From The Fear Of a Trial "Not Of Our Peers"
From The Fear Of Illegal Schools That Will Imprint
Our Children As "Inferiors"
From The Fear Of Search, Seizure, and Arrest In our
Homes
From The Fear Of Denial Of Our Rights Of Suffrage

Mr. Louis Tellez
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

Mrs. D. G. Coronado
NATIONAL AUXILIARY CHAIRMAN

Mr. Jose Candelario
NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAIRMAN

Mr. Ezequiel Duran
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY TREASURER

Rebecca Idar
NATIONAL JUNIOR
VICE CHAIRMAN

Dr. Hector P. Garcia
FOUNDER

Mr. Eduardo Terrones
NATIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN

Rev. Fr. Erwin Jurascheck
CHAPLAIN

Mrs. Mary L. Juarez
NATIONAL AUXILIARY
VICE CHAIRMAN

PROGRAM

MR. LOUIS TELLEZ
Chairman

MR. CRISTOBAL ALDRETE
Toastmaster

NATIONAL ANTHEM
MRS. ESTELLA AMADOR

INVOCATION
REV. FATHER ERWIN JURASCHECK
National Chaplain

PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO
MR. JAMES DE ANDA
By
FOUNDER DR. HECTOR P. GARCIA
And
EDROY-ODEM AMERICAN GI FORUM GROUP

ADDRESS
THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.
HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

OTHER AWARDS

Mr. Edward H. Harte, Publisher, Corpus Christi Caller Times
~~Major Orville Kortchner, U.S. Marine Corps~~
Mr. Domingo Pena, KIII Television Station and
KCCT Radio Station
Mrs. Dora Alvarez, Gold Star Mother

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

The Vice President Of The U.S. and Mrs. Hubert H. Humphrey

The Attorney General Of The U.S. Honorable Ramsey Clark

U.S. Senator From Texas Honorable Ralph Yarborough

U.S. Congressmen:

Honorable John Young

Honorable Henry B. Gonzales

Honorable Eligio De La Garza

Honorable Abraham Kazan

Honorable John Macy, Chief Of U.S. Civil Service Commission

Commissioner Vicente T. Ximenes, Chairman, Inter Agency
Commission For Mexican American Affairs

His Excellency Thomas J. Drury, Bishop Of Corpus Christi

Ambassador Raymond Tellez, U.S. Mexico Border
Development Commission

Mr. Joseph P. Molony, Vice President, United Steelworkers
Of America

Mr. Edward H. Harte, Publisher, Corpus Christi Caller Times

Honorable Noah Kennedy, Judge, Nueces County

Honorable Jack Blackmon, Mayor, Corpus Christi, Texas

Honorable Woodrow Seals, U.S. District Judge

Honorable Reynaldo Garza, U.S. District Judge

And

Mothers and Wives who have lost their dear ones in Vietnam

Ambassador Martin Luther King

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

AMERICAN G.I. FORUM

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

August 9, 1968

✓ John Young

✓ Chick Kizer

✓ Kaka Dayla Garza
Kayka

✓ Jack Brooks

Business
Business
Business
Noches, Amigos

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injustices and prejudices are being rooted out and destroyed.

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That same year -- 1948 -- Dr. Hector Garcia was fighting another battle in the cause of human rights. An American soldier who had been killed in action -- Felix Longoria -- had been refused burial in Three Rivers, Texas, because of his X MEXICAN AMERICAN ~~Latin~~ background. Dr. Garcia fought this unjust decision -- and he won.

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Hector Garcia
Christi

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MAPA
from
Calif

- Political Activity of Spanish
Speaking People - 10 Million

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more
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Senate Recommends
\$10 million

House defeated it by
1 vote

- 7 -

Needs
funds

This cultural tradition was recognized with passage of the Bi-lingual Education Act -- the first federal recognition of the special importance of the ability to speak two languages.

Now we must launch a major program of bilingual education, including teacher training, scholarships, text books, curriculum reform and research.

We must end -- now -- discriminatory practices in employment -- we must adequately fund the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission so good men like your former National President, VINCENTY HI-MEN-EEZ Vincente Ximenes, can do their work.

If I am President, I pledge that the federal government will be the model employer of Negro-Americans -- and that means from the White House on down.

This includes more responsibility for the inter-agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs -- a specific program of priority items -- and a secretariat to help the committee accomplish its objectives on schedule.

Communist
Ximenes

↳ It includes giving the poor a greater voice in the planning and implementation of local community programs, such as Head Start, and expanding the Migrant and Legal Aid programs.

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Farm
Factories.

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~~These are the goals I will pursue as President.~~

*La Raza must be justly
a fairly represented!*

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together -- in much the same spirit we displayed 20 years
ago -- in carrying the Civil Rights fight in the Democratic
National Conventions . . . and in founding the American
G. I. Forum.

Now we can continue this struggle together. I
ask your help.

Gracias##, Amigos, Gracias

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THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES
20th NATIONAL CONVENTION
ROBERT DRISCOLL HOTEL - 7:00 P.M.
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

[August 9, 1968]

1 (Introduction by Mr. Cristobal Aldrete.)

2
3 (Standing ovation.)

4
5 MR. HUMPHREY: Thank you very much; thank
6 you so much, thank you. My friend, Cristobal Aldrete,
7 told me I have to speak a little loud. He didn't know
8 I did that naturally.

9 I am very honored by this generous
10 introduction, and I am particularly pleased tonight
11 to share this platform with many very distinguished
12 fellow Americans. I want to pay my respects to the
13 Chairman of the American GI Forum, Mr. Louis Tellez,
14 and I surely want to pay my personal respect and
15 expression of warm and sincere friendship to one of
16 the great humanitarians of our time, Dr. Hector P.
17 Garcia (applause).

18 Since everybody is saying "viva," I
19 say viva American GI Forum (applause).

20 There are many members here tonight of
21 our Congress, and I know that they have been presented
22 to you, and you all, of course, -- or most of you, at
23 least, from this part of America are well acquainted
24 with them, but I want to particularly note the
25 presence of the Congressmen of this district; John

1 Young is one of my good friends and a tremendous
2 person in public life for the people of his State and
3 his district and his country; and Congressman Chick
4 Kazan, who is also with us; and Congressman Kinka
5 De La Garza, who is also with us here tonight; and
6 Congressman Jack Brooks. And then my good friend,
7 the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity
8 Commission, Vicente Ximenes.

9 There are so many I can say a word
10 about, there are twenty six or more Gold Star
11 mothers here tonight, and what a wonderful privilege
12 it is to have their presence, to have them present at
13 this gathering, and on behalf of a grateful country,
14 in my capacity as your Vice President, I want to thank
15 these Gold Star mothers for the great sacrifice that
16 their lives symbolize, and the fact that their sons
17 have given all that they had, their lives, for this
18 country of ours, and I salute them.

19 And I want also to take note of the fact
20 that we have some beautiful young ladies, and Mrs.
21 Humphrey, I think you ought to know that I have
22 already spent a little time with them. They represent
23 many of the states that are here, and I have had a
24 chance to have my picture taken; that is as much as
25 I'm going to tell you. We surely want to wish them

1 the very best.

2 And there is a very dear friend that I
3 have known for many years, he has served his country
4 as an Ambassador and still continues in that capacity,
5 and my good friend Ambassador Ray Tellez, I want him
6 to know how happy I am once again to see him.

7 And we have a Congressional Medal of
8 Honor winner tonight, too, if he has been introduced,
9 it is always good to introduce a man of that rank and
10 of that distinction again, and I am not sure that I
11 pronounce his name correctly, but I believe it is
12 Sergeant Rudolfo Hemendez; and Luther, I didn't miss
13 you, Commissioner Luther Holcomb of our Equal
14 Opportunity Employment Commission.

15 Now, my fellow Spanish-speaking
16 Americans, buenos noches, amigos, buenos noches,
17 amigos.

18 There is so much I want to talk to you
19 about. The first thing I want you to know is how
20 much we have appreciated this generous and kind and
21 warm and, indeed, it was very warm, welcome that we
22 have had to Corpus Christi, just simply marvelous,
23 and how grateful we are for the enthusiastic recep-
24 tion that has been accorded us.

25 This is almost an anniversary for the

1 American GI Forum and myself, because it was about
2 twenty years ago, on a very hot day in Philadelphia
3 that I stood before the Convention of my party, the
4 Democratic Party, and I asked that party to take a
5 stand on the question of human rights. I said then
6 what this organization has symbolized ever since, I
7 said it is time for this nation to walk out of the
8 shadows of states' rights and into the bright sun-
9 shine of human rights (applause). And we did, we
10 made that first step. We opened that door and looked
11 out to a brighter day.

12 And it was in that same year, 1948,
13 that Dr. Hector Garcia was fighting another battle
14 in the cause of human rights. An American soldier,
15 citizen of this land, brave and true to his country,
16 had been killed in action, Felix Longoria, and you
17 remember him. And he had been refused burial in
18 Three Rivers, Texas. And why, not because he was not
19 a citizen, because he was a citizen. Surely not
20 because he had failed to love his country, because
21 he had given his life for his country, but because of
22 prejudice, because of lack of understanding, and
23 really because of prejudice due to his
24 Mexican-American background.

25 And Dr. Garcia fought this unjust

1 action and decision. He made it a national issue,
2 he spoke up, not just for a man, he spoke up for a
3 purpose and a principle, and he won. He won, not only
4 for Felix Longoria, but he won for all Americans.
5 He won for the cause of human decency, and today the
6 body of Private Longoria rests in Arlington Cemetery,
7 the same place where our beloved President John
8 Kennedy and our good friend Senator Robert Kennedy
9 are now buried and resting in peace (applause).

10 It almost seems impossible that such a
11 thing could happen, but it did. But what was more
12 significant was that somebody cared, and somebody had
13 the fortitude and the courage to speak up, and to
14 rally the sense of goodness that is in this country.
15 And, you know, I really believe that there is a great,
16 deep sense of basic goodness in American, and I
17 believe that that sense of goodness can be aroused.
18 And when it is, the American people do the right
19 thing, as they did in the instance of the burial of
20 Felix Longoria.

21 Now this struggle to secure simple
22 justice for one Mexican-American boy and family
23 helped convince this good friend of mine, Dr. Garcia,
24 to expand his one-man crusade, to expand it against
25 intolerance and inequality wherever he found it. And

1 he, and his followers, and there are thousands of
2 them now, founded this American GI Forum, and they
3 founded it, as I recall, right here in Corpus Christi
4 in nineteen hundred and forty eight. And they chose
5 for their inspiration the philosophy of a great
6 saint, St. Francis of Assisi, and you remember what
7 St. Francis said in his immortal prayer, "Where there
8 is darkness, light; where there is hatred, love; and
9 where there is despair, hope."

10 Ladies and gentlemen, that is the
11 purpose of a free people, and that's the purpose of
12 the American GI Forum, that's the purpose of this
13 country, where there is darkness, let there be light,
14 where there is hatred, love, and where there is
15 despair, hope.

16 Now the early supporters of the GI
17 Forum came from the cotton fields of South Texas, from
18 the sheep and the goat raising lands of Southwest
19 Texas, from the oil country around Midland and Odessa,
20 and indeed from the big cities. It was a local
21 program and a local operation at first, and then it
22 grew; and it grew rapidly across the entire
23 Southwest. And as we see here tonight, it has grown
24 all across this vast land of ours. Many states are
25 represented, for the Spanish-speaking Americans

1 needed a voice, they needed to speak in concert, as
2 one. They needed an organization to help them battle
3 those age-old prejudices and discriminations which
4 have haunted their people and haunted this land. And
5 today, look what we have, so you can take heart.
6 Today the GI Forum stands as one of America's great
7 national organizations, together with LULAC, the
8 community service organization and others, and I think
9 of MAPA, a political force out in California, not
10 just striving to secure equality and justice for
11 Spanish surnamed Americans, but striving to secure
12 equality and liberty and justice for all Americans
13 everywhere throughout this country (applause).

14 And you have done something else, you
15 have not only organized to pass resolutions, to get
16 together in your conferences and conventions, but you
17 have organized to make your voices heard in political
18 activity.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, in a country that
20 has representative government, in a country where it
21 is the rule of law that should control, in a nation
22 that is wedded to the principle of government by the
23 consent of government, political life, political
24 activity, political participation, political action
25 is vital. And I want to commend these organizations,

1 whatever may be your partisan views, whatever your
2 views on candidates, for taking a stand, for under-
3 standing one thing above all, that your voices must be
4 heard, not only in our towns and villages and cities,
5 but their voices must be heard in concert in the halls
6 of Congress and at the White House and in the
7 governors' office, wherever there are public officials,
8 that is what we mean by -- (applause).

9 Your voice, your voice has been heard
10 in Washington. You have been at it now for twenty
11 years. It has been heard in the states with large
12 Spanish-speaking populations, and it will be heard
13 this fall, if you want it heard; and it can be heard
14 decisively this fall when the American people elect a
15 president, elect a Congress, and elect their state
16 and local leaders. And I believe that this group, I
17 believe that the Spanish-surnamed peoples, the
18 Mexican-Americans, can set an example for all
19 minorities, I believe you can do it (applause).

20 An example of peaceful, effective,
21 active political action, this is the way to get
22 things done. We have a way in this country to redress
23 our grievances, we do not need to take to the streets,
24 we need to take to the ballot box, that's the way to
25 get it done (applause).

1 And when I think of the fact that there
2 are millions of you, and there are, your voice can be
3 the voice of thunder in the political arena. It will
4 be heard if you want it. And I really call upon you
5 to mobilize and organize, to speak up for what you
6 want and what you believe in, to do it in an active
7 manner and an effective manner, and to do it in a
8 manner which will engender the respect, and bring you
9 the respect and, indeed, the praise of the American
10 people when you do it through political action, rather
11 than through violence, when you do it peacefully rather
12 than through disorder. Oh, what a good experience
13 and what a good example this would be at a time when
14 we desperately need it, so do it. (Applause.)

15 I am not going to run down what I think
16 that we have been able to accomplish these years,
17 these recent years. I can just tell you one thing,
18 as many of your leaders here can tonight, we have
19 accomplished more in the last few years than in the
20 preceding twenty five or fifty.

21 And, ladies and gentlemen, now what
22 democracy is, democracy is the starts, the beginnings.
23 Once you make the beginnings, then you get the
24 achievements. You have to make the break-throughs,
25 you have to make the starts. And we have made some

1 beginnings. And you have made some wonderful
2 accomplishments these past several years.
3 Mexican-Americans have been appointed to high public
4 offices. They have been elected to office, many
5 projects have been funded, and many injustices have
6 been corrected. We know that more has been done than
7 ever before, but that isn't enough. We know that
8 even more remains undone, and the fact is that when
9 we are able to do something that helps correct the
10 injustices, it only arouses us to want to do more.

11 You know, when you find that it is
12 impossible to do anything, you lose hope, but when you
13 find it is possible to do something, you then have
14 hope that you can do everything. And that is the
15 healthy restlessness that I see in the American
16 people. We now know that we can win these old battles
17 against these ancient enemies of man. We now know
18 that we can win the struggle against disease and
19 illiteracy, against fear, discrimination and in-
20 tolerance, we know we can, we know we can begin to
21 win this war on poverty; we know that we can begin
22 to win some victories, we are anxious for a great
23 success, and we want to do more than we have ever
24 done before. This is why there is a fermented
25 America today, not because we are not doing

1 anything, we are restless and we are anxious and we
2 are, at times, frustrated because we have been able
3 to do something and we want to do so much more, that
4 is what is happening in our country. (Applause)

5 So we have a sense of urgency, and I
6 hope we always will. I don't want this American of
7 ours to become too patient; I don't want us to become
8 timid; I don't want us to ever become self-satisfied.
9 We should never compare ourselves even with others, we
10 must have our own standards.

11 The first amongst all the urgent tasks
12 that confronts this nation and confronts everybody,
13 no matter who they are, or from whence they come, is
14 this task of peace, reduction of international ten-
15 sions, which are today drawing far too great a share
16 of the world's resources away from the urgent needs
17 of people. The arms race which consumes our wealth
18 endangers our very lives.

19 You did not fight the wars of the past,
20 and your boys are not fighting and dying in Viet Nam
21 today so that there would be more danger, more misery,
22 and more war. America has fought its wars and built
23 its unparalleled defensive strength to achieve a
24 groundwork for lasting peace, not for conquest, not
25 to punish, not to have dominion, but rather for

1 self-determinations, a self-determination of nations,
2 and for dignity of people.

3 We can say, with great honor and
4 integrity, that our men and the men that are
5 represented here tonight gave of themselves and some --
6 and these families gave everything, not to make
7 America richer or bigger or stronger, but to make a
8 world safer, safer for many people. We have never
9 wanted this world to be made in our image. We have
10 not wanted it stamped "Made in U.S.A.". We have
11 wanted this world safe, as the late President Kennedy
12 put it, "Safe for diversity, for differences." But
13 we wanted it a world in which men and women of every
14 race, creed and nationality or origin of every kind
15 could fashion their own lives without the fear of
16 aggression or brute force.

17 And, my fellow Americans, it is right
18 and noble that a nation that has been blessed as this
19 one, a nation blessed, I am sure, by Divine
20 Providence, blessed by a great system of government
21 and economy, that this nation should want to see that
22 other people can live in peace, and live without fear.

23 What a terrible poison is fear and
24 hatred, and this great country of ours that you
25 represent, this American GI Forum, so appropriately

1 named, has waged a constant struggle against fear and
2 hatred and intolerance and brutality wherever it may
3 be found, so you are surely in the spirit of your
4 land.

5 Now, I believe it is time to move ahead
6 with equal courage to seize the rewards of peace. I
7 believe that much of this world of ours today is
8 more ready than ever for reconciliation.

9 I have called for a new era in American
10 foreign policy, based on peaceful engagement rather
11 than containment or hostile confrontation. I believe
12 that humanity is at long last awakening to the fact
13 that war is no longer a suitable means of settling
14 international disputes, I really believe that humanity
15 is. (Applause)

16 And to be more specific, I believe that
17 the time is coming when it will be possible for us to
18 sit down with the Soviet Union, another super power,
19 to talk about mutual reduction of both offensive and
20 defensive weapons, how important that will be. It
21 means a massive international effort, too, on our
22 part, to start closing the gap between the rich and
23 the poor nations, just as we must close the gap here
24 at home between the rich and the poor.

25 And I also believe that the time is at

1 hand when we must have every possible American initiative,
2 when we must take the first steps for a peaceful world.
3 And why do I say that, because we have more to lose
4 than anyone else, and we have more to do with than
5 anyone else.

6 Remember that the work of the
7 peacemaker is not the work of a coward; only the brave
8 dare pursue peace, only the weak speak in terms of
9 belligerency and anger and hatred. Let's be strong
10 enough to love and not to hate, to seek peace.

11 (Applause)

12 And, my friends, there are such urgent
13 tasks here at home, so much to do, so much for us to
14 do. In every city and every town and every rural
15 community, and so much to do with. Oh, what a
16 fortunate people we are, how lucky to be alive at this
17 time. We know these are special problems that are
18 faced by many Americans of Mexican descent. Your
19 people, and they are my people, too, because we are
20 all Americans. So many have been denied just a chance,
21 we are not talking now about being denied wealth and
22 privilege, but so many people have been denied just a
23 chance, and remember this, that the promise of
24 America, above everything else, is a chance, your
25 chance, the right to live and to work, to be your-

1 self, the right to make something out of your live.
2 This, above all, is the promise of this land.

3 As I said in El Paso -- that was a
4 great meeting, by the way, I really enjoyed that
5 occasion down in El Paso. I wish I could have stayed
6 longer, I heard it warmed up after I left, but --
7 (laughter) right, Mr. Commissioner?

8 Here is something that I said on that
9 occasion, "Our purpose is grander than simply
10 guaranteeing the opportunity to achieve a decent
11 American standard of living. We are talking about
12 providing a material basis on which a cultural
13 tradition that is precious to America can grow and
14 flourish."

15 It is true, you know, there is some-
16 thing more important than bread or wealth. It is
17 true that man does not live by bread alone. It
18 surely is true that every American ought to have a
19 right of economic opportunity, have a job, have
20 ownership. Yes, those are basic rights that ought
21 to come with the fact of American citizenship. But
22 there is something even more important than that in
23 this wonderful country of ours, and that is the
24 right, as I said, to be yourself, to have your own
25 culture, your own religion, your own way of doing

1 things, and this richness of cultural tradition which
2 blesses this land of many people from many, many,
3 many sources is what makes America not only rich and
4 abundant and powerful, but it is what makes America
5 beautiful. (Applause)

6 Now this cultural tradition was
7 recognized with the passage of the Bilingual
8 Education Act. Now, that was the first recognition
9 by your federal government of the special importance
10 of the ability to speak two languages and in being
11 able to speak two languages, to be able to preserve a
12 cultural tradition, a federal government recognition.

13 Now, you know what happened to that
14 Bilingual Education Act, we had quite a time. The
15 President asked for it to be funded, and my good
16 friends here of the House who all worked here to help
17 us, know that by one vote, just one vote, it was
18 lost in the House of Representatives. That tells you
19 how important one man is, one vote.

20 I was on a trip to the West when I
21 heard about this, and I wired back to every member
22 of the Senate Committee, as the presiding officer of
23 the Senate, and I asked the Senate to reverse that
24 action. I asked the Senate to put money into the
25 bill so that we could have some money for funding the

1 Bilingual Education Act, and the Senate put in
2 ten million dollars. (Applause)

3 Now, that bill is in conference now, and
4 we will come out with not as much as we would have
5 wanted, but we are not going to let it die. You see,
6 we must launch a major program in this country of
7 bilingual education, including teacher-trained,
8 scholarships, textbooks, curriculum reform and
9 research. This will be just -- this will help our
10 country so much, not just for Spanish-speaking
11 Americans, but bilingual education every place in
12 this country where they need it, and where they want
13 it, even including our Indian reservations, and it
14 can be done and we ought to have it done. (Applause)

15 You have, tonight, in this audience
16 two of the commissioners, and maybe more, but two
17 that I have recognized, of our Equal Opportunity
18 Commission. You have the chairman of that
19 Commission, Mr. Ximenes, who is with us, and you have
20 Dr. Luther Holcomb, who are with us. These men are
21 dedicated, dedicated men to the proposition that
22 any form of discrimination, and it happens to be in
23 their jurisdiction, discrimination in employment,
24 and employment practices must go, must be done away
25 with.

1 Well, now, let me say that we must
2 adequately, therefore, fund, that is we must provide
3 the tools, the resources for our Equal Employment
4 Opportunity Commission so that these good men can do
5 their work. This is what I mean by political action,
6 watch every vote in Congress, every vote in the
7 legislature, watch every agency that is established
8 to help secure these rights.

9 I want to state right now that if I am
10 privileged to serve as the President of this land, I
11 pledge here that the federal government will be the
12 model employer of Mexican-Americans, the model
13 employer, and that means from the White House on down,
14 we will be model employers. (Applause)

15 We have already made some progress.
16 President Johnson is taking some important steps,
17 but I want it on the record here that the one way to
18 demonstrate to all Americans, to every private
19 employer, to every state government, to every mayor,
20 to every organization that we really believe in
21 non-discrimination, and that we really have faith in
22 and believe in the capacities, and the qualities of
23 our people, and in this instance of the Spanish-
24 speaking people, of the Mexican-American people. The
25 one way to make it ring true is for the highest office

1 of this land, right down to the lowest office of this
2 land, to practice it, and I will practice it, so help
3 me. (Standing ovation.)

4 And, by the way, this also includes --
5 this includes more responsibility for the
6 Interagency Committee for Mexican-American Affairs,
7 chaired by Commissioner Ximenes, and a specific
8 detailed program of action for that committee. And I
9 might add, Mr. Chairman, a secretariat, that is a
10 staff to help this committee accomplish its objectives
11 on schedule. (Applause) And it also includes giving
12 the poor a greater voice in the planning and the
13 implementation of local community action programs.
14 And you know what I mean, these programs are designed
15 to help the poor, and one of the best ways to help the
16 poor is to let the poor help themselves, people have
17 to learn. (Applause) People have to learn, they have
18 to learn how to take responsibility. And if the
19 federal government isn't willing to trust the people,
20 then why should the people trust the government.
21 (Applause)

22 I know that there will be mistakes made
23 and I want to make it quite clear, as I speak on the
24 public record, I know that if we permit, and we
25 encourage the poor to have a greater voice in the

1 planning and in the execution and in the administra-
2 tion of local community programs, I know that there
3 are going to be mistakes. I know that some of the
4 money won't be spent as well as if you had had some
5 graduate of the Harvard School of Business handling
6 your affairs, I know that. I know that the people
7 will not always run the community action program
8 as well as the AT&T, or General Motors runs their
9 business. But I want to tell you something, the
10 important thing in a democracy is not that it is
11 one hundred percent efficient, but that it is one
12 hundred percent just and humane, that is what is
13 important. (Applause)

14 You can read the Old and the New
15 Testament, Dr. Holcomb, the Declaration of
16 Independence and the Constitution of the United States,
17 and the Emancipation Proclamation, and you will find
18 many words about love and brotherhood, God and
19 country, and you will find words about decency and
20 humanity, but you won't find one word that says
21 efficiency. (Applause)

22 I happen to believe that you ought to
23 try to be as efficient as humanly possible, but if
24 the price of efficiency is to deny people a chance to
25 run their own affairs; if the price of efficiency is

1 to deny people a chance to have something to say
2 about their lives, then I think we had better start
3 re-evaluating what our values are in this country.

4 (Applause)

5 I ought to explain what I'm thinking
6 about, because I can just hear somebody coming back,
7 saying you know what, that Vice President, when he
8 was running for President, he went out there and
9 recommended the poor people have something to say
10 about their lives and to run some of the programs
11 affecting their lives, and look, they wasted some
12 money. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I want to tell
13 you something, you don't have to be poor to waste
14 money. In fact, the poor waste less than anybody
15 because they have less to waste. (Applause)

16 Well, I thought you might be interested
17 in my views. I think that this new spirit in our
18 country that is desperately needed includes giving
19 able-bodied men the chance to support their families
20 with decency and pride. And when I say the chance,
21 I mean making that chance, not just saying that there
22 is a chance. If we are half as ingenious in
23 opening up job opportunities to people of the
24 minorities as we have been ingenious in closing out
25 job opportunities of people of the minorities, we

1 will have a lot of jobs for people of the minorities.
2 (Applause)

3 Just a week ago, I sat in a hotel room
4 on a Sunday morning, 8:00 o'clock, having breakfast
5 with a remarkable man. I had met him before, I had
6 read much about him. I knew that he was giving of
7 his life for the poor people. His name is Cesar
8 Chavez. (Applause)

9 Well, I am aware that he is a man of
10 controversy. Most people that amount to anything are,
11 they are. I sometimes get worried when too many
12 people start to like you all at one time, and I
13 listened to this man tell the story of the migrant
14 worker in the Valley. And he told me just one thing
15 that rings in my mind tonight. He said, "We want no
16 special favors, Mr. Vice President. We want merely
17 the chance to build a union so that the members can
18 help themselves." That is all he asked for.

19 (Applause)

20 And I think you ought to know where I
21 stand on this matter, and not where I stand now but
22 where I have stood for a long, long time, because I
23 didn't get any of this election religion, not a bit.
24 I have had it a long, long time. (Applause)

25 I happen to believe that the farm

1 workers of American, these farm workers that -- I'm
2 not talking now about family farmers, I'm talking
3 about those factory farms, we know what we're talking
4 about. Tell it as it is, the kids say, and that is
5 what I am going to do, tell it as it is.

6 These farm workers of America must have
7 this chance to have their union and to bargain
8 collectively, and they must be covered by the
9 National Labor Relations Act with the full rights
10 under the laws of the United States. (Applause)
11 Their full rights to organize and to bargain
12 collectively.

13 Now, let me just expand that for a
14 moment. I do not believe that any person can really
15 enjoy their meal if they know that the food that they
16 are eating, and you pay plenty for it when it has
17 been prepared, if the food that you're eating has
18 been produced and processed under conditions that
19 are less than fair labor standards, and you ought
20 not to be very happy eating that kind of food.

21 (Applause)

22 The present minimum wage coverage for
23 farm workers, I think, must be extended, and we must
24 push forward to achieve other fringe benefits which
25 other factory workers have enjoyed for a generation.

1 It is wrong, morally wrong, economically wrong,
2 politically wrong to exploit anybody. And the most
3 exploited worker in America today is the migrant farm
4 worker, and we have got to put a stop to it.

5 (Applause)

6 All the government has to do is to
7 permit these people to have the benefits of a law
8 that other workers have, and I have been a friend of
9 the worker for a long time, and by the way, it hasn't
10 hurt America a bit, not one bit. (Applause) The
11 American worker has made America prosperous.

12 Now, I cast the tie-breaking vote as
13 the president of the Senate when an attempt was made
14 to revive the bracero program. Now we must come to
15 grips with the problem, a new problem, it is called
16 the problem of the green card commuter. (Applause)

17 Now, ladies and gentlemen, these are
18 not difficult problems, these are just simple
19 problems of justice; simple problems of fair play.
20 We're going to have to make up our mind as
21 Americans how we want Americans to live, and I don't
22 think I have any right, as a public official, to
23 stand idly by and let other Americans be exploited
24 while I enjoy the good things of life, and I don't
25 intend to do it as a citizen, as a Vice President, or

1 a President. (Applause)

2 On my campaign, I have already proposed
3 that young men be selected for the draft on the
4 basis of what we call the fair and impartial random
5 system, on a national lottery, I think that is a fair
6 system. (Applause)

7 Now, let me say something about the
8 draft boards. Those draft boards should be fully
9 representative of the local community, and that
10 means where there is -- (applause) -- and that means
11 where there is a large Spanish surname population,
12 La Rasa must be fairly and justly represented.
13 (Applause)

14 Now, all that I have said to you
15 tonight is direct, clear and indeed almost simple,
16 because all I have talked to you about is what you
17 want for yourself. I want a fair chance, and I have
18 had it. Why shouldn't somebody else have it.
19 This is not a country for the aristocrats or for
20 the privileged. This is a country in which every
21 American is to have the privilege of the full benefit
22 of an American citizenship. In other words,
23 privileged for all, benefits for all, a chance for
24 all. And sometimes I think we complicate things far
25 too much. We talk all about legal structures and we

1 talk about laws, and really what all we ought to be
2 talking about is do unto others as you would have them
3 do unto you, and that will settle it pretty well.

4 (Applause)

5 So we join here tonight, really, in a
6 celebration of twenty years of working together,
7 living together, achieving together, planning
8 together, and looking ahead together. And I think
9 these are objectives that we can strive for, that I
10 have talked of tonight, and that we can achieve
11 rather quickly. We can do it, just as we did it
12 when we charged our country with the responsibility
13 to implement equal opportunity.

14 I helped do that twenty years ago, in
15 the Democratic Party, and it took a long time, and
16 some people are still holding back. But let us
17 make it crystal clear, segregation, discrimination,
18 intolerance, bigotry, all those evils that have
19 plagued this nation and mankind for so many genera-
20 tions, those are things of the past, the remnants
21 still hang on. There are a few of them that are
22 still here, but they have had their day. They are
23 dead and gone, the trouble is some of them yet
24 haven't been buried, and we are going to get at that
25 job. (Applause)

1 So I ask you to do one thing -- look,
2 this is not a one-man job, and it isn't a
3 one-organization job. I have had the privilege of
4 working with the American GI Forum since the first
5 time you testified before a committee in the Congress.
6 You may not even remember it, but I got a little
7 citation from you a long, long time ago, I cherish
8 that. We have been together for almost now twenty
9 years, and I suggest that we can continue this struggle
10 together, and I ask your help.

11 Gracias, amigos, gracias.

12 (Standing ovation.)

13 (End of speech.)

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ISO
max-on

August 1, 1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey

FROM: Cris Aldrete *CA*

RE: THOUGHTS FOR SPEECH ON MEXICAN AMERICANS WHEN
ADDRESSING THE AMERICAN G I FORUM CONVENTION IN
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS.

NOTA BENE: In speech or comments, do not use the word
"WHITE". The Mexican American uses the term
"ANGLO" when referring to the remainder of the
White Community which is not Latin.

The salient issues in the Mexican American cause with
which the Vice President should identify himself are the
following:

MB

1. SELECTIVE SERVICE ACT--A. Proposing a National
Lottery system that would be the most democratic way of
drafting for compulsory military service.

The militants and the opposition have harped on the
inequities of the present Draft Laws which discriminate
against the poor and this, for all practical purposes, means
the ethnic, racial and cultural minorities, to-wit: Mexican
Americans, Puerto Ricans and Negroes.

*to the
point of
Hawaii*

The casualty lists from Viet Nam have been used to
prove the heavy load the minorities have been taking in
deaths and wounded. Although this argument can, to a great

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extent, be explained by the large percentage of volunteers for the military service by the minorities, yet at the same time a major share can be attributed to the weaknesses of the Selective Service System.

When the defensive response to this issue stresses that the major share of volunteers are by the minorities, the criticism is rightfully levelled that unfortunately the military service offers a greater hope, education, health and financial aid for the serviceman's family than civilian life does for the poor, the disadvantaged and the minorities.

B. DIRECT FEDERAL APPOINTMENT OF DRAFT BOARDS -

The present system centering the power of recommendation for appointment in the state governors, with appointment by the President being a mere formality, has revealed Magnolia Blossom or all Anglo Draft Boards with token, if any, minority representation. The appointments should be federally controlled and should be made for a given term of perhaps four years.

Great criticism arose during World War II and now again during the Viet Nam Conflict against such draft boards that had no minority representation.

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Note: See statistics exhibits attached.

2. BORDER COMMUTERS (Green Card Holders)

We should proudly point out the repeal of PL 78 that ended the Bracero Program. Further, we should cite the U. S. Department of Labor's implementation of numerous regulations which have imposed certain restrictions on Commuters, and even the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, likewise, has adopted restrictive regulations which have stemmed the heretofore easy immigration of Mexicans into the United States.

Even so, the crux of the matter is the failure of our statutes to require actual physical residence by the immigrant once he gains admission into the United States as a permanent resident alien. I understand that this stems from a World War I agreement with Canada.

Although no retroactive policy could be adopted which would require these commuting aliens to physically reside and remain domiciled in this country, yet a proposed statute that would cure this loophole would certainly gain great acclaim amongst the Mexican American and organized labor

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circles within this group.

3. AMENDMENT TO NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT TO INCLUDE
FARM WORKERS -

The Vice President should stress his stand favoring
an amendment to the National Labor Relations Act to include
coverage of agricultural workers.

This would be a propitious moment to praise Cesar (huh?)
--Chavez, that is!--and identify him and the Vice President
with the same, tenacious and dedicated struggle of men who
rise from the poor, humble and rural communities and who
dedicate themselves to public service to better the lot of
their fellow man.

NON-VIOLENCE of the Mexican American, of the migratory
farm laborer, reveal his faith in the democratic processes
of this great country, but at the same time this minority
has made known, and continues to make known, through the
constitutional processes, his strong feelings against intole-
rance, against injustices, against inferior educational oppor-
tunities, and his mounting and most emphatic demands for a
first class citizenship.

4. EDUCATION

A recent speech by the Vice President calls on early

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*Bilingual
not stated*
childhood education and could be repeated, adding "with a bilingual flavor", that would instill a sense of pride in our bi-cultural Mexican American youth.

Reiterate the Vice President's support of the BILINGUAL EDUCATION ACT and his efforts to have the Senate restore the appropriation requested by the Bureau of the Budget (\$5 million) - now Senate Committee asks for \$10 million.

The Vice President certainly should take major credit for the great benefits of Head Start.

The following remarks quoting Office of Education Commissioner Harold Howe, would have a tremendous impact on this group at this occasion:

When people speak on the "Mexican American Problem", one readily discovers that they are talking about housing, about education, about employment opportunities, or any number of things.

Let us talk about the "education problem"--"and it is basically just one problem: helping every youngster -- whatever his home background, whatever his home language, whatever his ability--become all he has it in him to become."

"Such a goal is a lofty one, and it is doubtful that the schools will ever achieve it perfectly. What must concern us

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is the degree to which many schools fail to come within a country mile of that goal. And if Mexican-American children have a higher drop-out rate than any other identifiable group in the Nation--and they do--the schools cannot explain away their failure by belaboring the 'Mexican American problem'. The problem, simply, is that the schools have failed with these children."

5. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE -

The creation of a Special Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice dedicated specifically to handle complaints of the Spanish Speaking, should be strongly recommended.

The Department of Justice has been most remiss in this area, for the Civil Rights policies and activities of the Department of Justice have been almost exclusively Negro-oriented.

For years, Mexican Americans organizations like the American G I Forum have complained bitterly about the failure of this Department to pay any attention to their complaints, much less employ attorneys from the Mexican American and Puerto Rican community.

6. A commitment by Vice President Humphrey that he

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*from about
on the
Domestic
policy
Council*

would appoint a Mexican American to a Cabinet level position
or to a top level post in the Administration, as well as
the appointment of a Mexican American to serve on the Presi-
dent's White House staff, would be the greatest news from
a Democrat yet!



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